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AROUND TOWN

Observer online

Have you checked out our newly redesigned website? It's chock full of local news from Redford and is updated often. There are several cool features at www.hometownlife.com that allow you browse through the latest news and features from your neighboring communities, too; allow you to chime in with your opinion on our stories, editorials and letters to the editor; check out our amazing photo galleries and videos that are captured daily by our reporters and photographers. Readers can also find garage sale listings – with a map! – each week from Wednesday through Sunday.

Kobylarz: 'The best is yet to come'



TOM BEAUDOIN

Redford Township Supervisor Tracey Schultz Kobylarz gave her State of the Township address Wednesday.

BY PAT MURPHY
OBSERVER STAFF WRITER

Businessman Tom Boyle was looking for two things at the State of the Township Address by Supervisor Tracey Schultz Kobylarz.

"I want assurance the township is financially sound," said the managing partner of Norwood Boyle Construction Services, "and that the fire and police departments are stable."

After the address, Boyle, a 1976 graduate of Thurston High School, said, "I felt that her address was almost directed personally at me." The township has been through a difficult year, he said, "But I'm confident in the way she (the supervisor) is handling things."

It has indeed been a tough year, Kobylarz said of her third as supervisor. Tax revenue has dropped because of lower property values, she said, and the township had to cut \$3 million from the budget. "But we did it," she said, "without one layoff (this year), and without eliminating one program."

Kobylarz didn't say the worst was over. But things seem to be looking up slightly, she said. Not long ago the township had 2,000 vacant houses, she said, "now we have about 800. People still want to come to Redford Township," she said, because it offers good schools and a high quality of life.

"Our best days are ahead," she insisted. The supervisor credited department heads and township employees for being

innovative and dedicated. But three years ago, she said, every employee did his or her job. "Now they do 10 jobs," she said, as they assume more duties and responsibilities.

The township has been forced to find new ways of doing things, Kobylarz said. One of those new ways was underscored when the supervisor introduced and then administered the oath of office to four new auxiliary firefighters.

They are the first part-timers on the department since the early 1970s, according to sources. But they won't be the last. Six other auxiliary firefighters are currently undergoing testing and background checks.

Please see **ADDRESS, A2**



PHOTOS BY TOM BEAUDOIN

Rev. Demetrus Booker from Lighthouse Community Church shares a laugh with Rev. Jeff Nelson from Redford Aldersgate UMC at a special reception hosted by Township Supervisor Tracey Schultz Kobylarz.

ADDRESS

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Madelyn Williams, a township resident and spokeswoman for DTE, characterized the supervisor's speech as "inspirational." The supervisor deserves credit for seeing the

township through difficult times, she said.

Vivian Maltby also enjoyed the address. The supervisor's done a good job during very difficult times, she said.

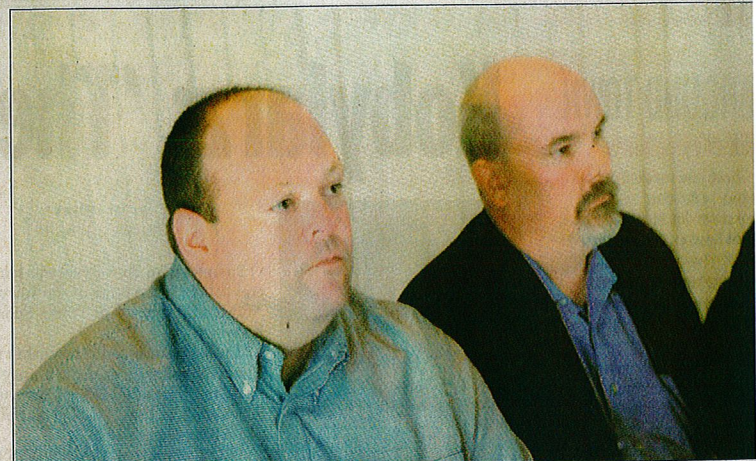
"I was encouraged by her address," said Lawrence Toth, president of the Redford Interfaith Relief program. The township is still a very good

place to live and work, he said.

Proceeds from the \$20 per person luncheon at The Village of Redford — which provided the hall and food without charge — were donated to the Partnership for a Better Redford, an effort organized by the South Redford and Redford Union school districts and the township to cooperate on mutual problems and find ways of improving the community.



A good crowd showed up to hear the speech.



Township Assessors Doug Shaw and Aaron Powers listen to the speech.